

REMARKS

Applicant amended paragraph 0015 of the Specification so that the first rotational direction is consistently associated with the agitate mode.

Claims 3-9 were objected to because of a clerical error. Claims 3-5 are cancelled. Applicant amended claims 6-9, as suggested by the Examiner, such that this objection should be withdrawn.

Applicant amended claims 7 and 13 so the first rotational direction is consistently associated with the agitate mode and the second rotational direction is consistently associated with the spin mode.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Independent claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Schultz (Pat. No. 5,503,261) or Kellerman (Pat. No. 3,945,478). Applicant amended claim 1 to include the limitations of claims 2-5. The Examiner indicated claim 5 would be allowable if written in independent form. Claim 1 should now be in allowable form.

Claims 2-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Kellerman. Applicant cancelled claims 2-4.

Claims 6-8 were previously indicated to be allowable and depend from allowable claim 1.

Claims 9-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Schultz. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections, and requests reconsideration of the claims as amended.

Claim 9 depends on claim 1 and should be allowable as depending on an allowable base claim. In addition, although Schultz teaches rubber-based friction pads on the outer peripheral edge of the intermediate plate (col. 4, lines 16-21), neither Schultz nor Kellerman teaches using frictional material on the hub. Using frictional material on the hub provides the added benefit of further facilitating engagement between the hub and the intermediate plate.

Independent claim 10 is amended to include the combination of the cam surface on the drive member engaging the cam follower on the intermediate plate. In contrast, Schultz does not

use a combination which includes a cam that engages the intermediate plates. Schultz uses drive pins (24 and 26), washers (60 and 63), crescent washers (65 and 66), and push-on fasteners (62 and 69) to mount the intermediate plates to the drive member. (See Fig. 1; col. 4, lines 47-62.) By using a combination of fasteners and pins, Schultz uses more parts which increases manufacturing costs and assembly time. In addition, Schultz fails to teach a combination in which the outer peripheral edge of the intermediate plates flexes. Rather, Schultz teaches two intermediate plates (called shoes) that pivot in response to centrifugal force. In Schultz, the shoes do not flex. (Col. 7, lines 15-36.) Therefore, claim 10 is distinguished from Schultz and is in proper form for allowance under both 35 U.S.C. § 102 and 35 U.S.C. § 103.

Independent claim 11 is amended to reflect a method that uses a cam surface on a drive member to engage a cam follower on an intermediate plate causing the intermediate plate to rotate. In contrast, Schultz fails to teach a cam used to rotate the intermediate plates, and Schultz fails to teach engaging the hub by flexing the outer peripheral edge of the intermediate plates. Rather, Schultz uses two intermediate plates (called shoes) that pivot in response to centrifugal force. The shoes do not flex. (Col. 7, lines 15-36.) Kellerman also does not show the cams required by claim 11. Kellerman is designed to use a spring arm concept (Fig. 2) which relies on spring arms bending in response to centrifugal force rather than a cam that causes flexing on the outer peripheral edge of the intermediate plate. In addition, Kellerman is a clutch for a chain saw (col. 2, lines 64-65) which only spins in one direction, unlike a washing appliance which requires a clutch that can engage in two directions. Therefore, claim 11 is distinguished from Schultz and Kellerman and is in proper form for allowance under both 35 U.S.C. § 102 and 35 U.S.C. § 103.

Claims 12-13 depend on independent claim 11 and should be allowable as depending on an allowable base claim. Furthermore, they emphasize the method of operating the drive member in first and second rotational directions, a feature not shown by Kellerman.

New Claims

New claims 14-15 depend on independent claim 11 and should be allowable as depending on an allowable base claim. These claims also emphasize the first and second operational directions, and are allowable for this further reason.

New claims 16-17 depend on independent claim 10 and should be allowable as depending on an allowable base claim. These claims also recite the first and second rotational directions.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that a notice of allowance be issued.

No fees or extensions of time are believed to be due in connection with this amendment; however, consider this a request for any extension inadvertently omitted, and charge any additional fees to Deposit Account No. 26-0084.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael G. Voorhees, Reg. No. 25,715
McKee, Voorhees & Sease, P.L.C.
801 Grand Avenue, Suite 3200
Des Moines, Iowa 50309-2721
Phone No. (515) 288-3667
Fax No. (515) 288-1338
CUSTOMER NO: 27139

Attorneys of Record

- pw -